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AT 115

HARTGEN JUDITH A
79 BUENOS AIRES 10446

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ACTION ARA-15

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IC-14 ADS-00 HA-05 CIAF-00 DODF-00
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3628
INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
AMEMBASSY PRASILIA
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USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY ROMF
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
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ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

(X) Release () Excise () Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: () In Part (X) In Full

() Classify as () Extend as () Downgrade to

Date Declassify on Reason

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USEEC

ROME FOR VATICAN OFFICE

E.O. 12065: GDS 12/28/85 (HALLMAN, WILLIAM CR-P

TAGS: SEUM AR

SUBJ: (U) HUMAN RIGHTS SUMMARY - DECEMBER 22-28, 1979

REF: BUENOS AIRFS 10365

SUMMARY: A NON-EVENT MARKS THIS WEEK'S HUMAN RIGHTS
FRONT: THERE WERE EXPECTATIONS THAT THE GOVERNMENT
MIGHT ISSUE A CHRISTMAS LIST OF PEOPLE "OPTIONED,"
AMNESTIED, RELEASED -- BUT NONE CAME OUT, NOT EVEN ONE
MERELY LISTING PEOPLE WE KNOW TO HAVE BEEN ALREADY

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RELEASED OR ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY. THE GOVERNMENT'S
SILENCE ON PEOPLE ALREADY RELEASED -- NO LIST HAS BEEN
PUBLISHED SINCE AUGUST -- IS PUZZLING. END SUMMARY.

.. (U) SWORD OF DAMOCLES -- VIDELA:

AT A DEC. 21 LUNCHEON MEETING WITH MEMBERS OF A BUSINESS
GROUP, PRESIDENT VIDELA APPEARED TO PUT THE COMPLEX HUMAN
RIGHTS ISSUE BEYOND HIM. VIDELA SAID, "ARGENTINA IS NOT
AN "X" NUMBER OF DISAPPEARED, IMPRISONED OR DEAD PERSONS.

THE WAR HAS BEEN LEFT IN THE PAST . . . WE THINK OF THE
PRESENT AND THE FUTURE OF THIS ARGENTINA, WHICH CANNOT BE
FRUSTRATED BY THAT MEMORY, WHICH IS ANHISTORICAL REALITY
BUT WHICH CANNOT BE A SWORD OF DAMOCLES HANGING OVER THE
PRESENT OR MUCH LESS THE FUTURE.

.. (U) MENTABERRY:

THE DEC. 26 EDITORIAL OF THE BUENOS AIRES HERALD DEALT WITH
THE NOVEMBER 28 APPARENT MURDER OF JAVIER MENTABERRY, A

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JOURNALIST WITH THE COMMUNIST MAGAZINE "INFORME". IT EXPRESSED DISMAY OVER THE LACK OF PUBLIC INTEREST IN THE CASE AND MOREOVER THE EASY ACCEPTANCE OF MENTABERRY'S DEATH. THE EDITORIAL GOES ON TO SAY THAT ONE OF THE DAMAGING EFFECTS OF ARGENTINA'S RECENT PAST, "HAS BEEN THE ACCEPTANCE BY A WIDE RANGE OF OPINION THAT POLITICAL ENEMIES ARE FAIR GAME FOR ASSASSINS." THE EDITORIAL DOES NOT PLACE THE BLAME FOR MENTABERRY'S DEATH ON ANY PARTICULAR PERSON OR PERSONS, BUT USES PUBLIC REACTION TO THE DEATH AS AN EXAMPLE OF ONE OF THE REGRETTABLE PECULIARITIES OF ARGENTINE LIFE.

3. (U) NAVY ORDERED TO PAY 30 MILLION PESOS:
A FEDERAL JUDGE ORDERED THE NAVY HIGH COMMAND TO PAY 30 MILLION PESOS TO A MAN WHO LOST THREE FINGERS AS A

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RESULT OF INJURIES SUSTAINED WHEN NAVY MARINES SEARCHED FOR TERRORIST DURING A RAID IN LA PLATA. DANIEL SIMINCOVICH WAS WOUNDED ON MARCH 22, 1976, WHEN HE AND TWO FRIENDS WERE ATTACKED BY A GROUP OF NAVY MARINES. ONE OF THE MEN WITH SIMINCOVICH WAS KILLED DURING THE ATTACK.

4. (U) PERMANENT ASSEMBLY'S COMMUNIQUE:
THE PERMANENT HUMAN RIGHTS ASSEMBLY RELEASED A

COMMUNIQUE DECEMBER 27 WHICH LISTED POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN ARGENTINA. AMONG THINGS LISTED WERE FEWER KIDNAPPINGS AND OTHER TERRORIST ACTS AND THE VISIT OF THE INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION LAST SEPTEMBER. THE COMMUNIQUE GOES ON TO SAY THAT THE ASSEMBLY IS STILL CONCERNED ABOUT LACK OF FREEDOM OF THE PRESS AND THAT THERE ARE NO FORTHCOMING SOLUTIONS TO SUCH LONGSTANDING PROBLEMS AS THE DISAPPEARED, PEN PRISONERS, AND TREATMENT OF PRISONERS.

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